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P 041442Z OCT 07
FM AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2745
RUEHDK/AMEMBASSY DAKAR 1290
INFO RUEHXR/RWANDA COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHGV/USMISSION GENEVA 4249
RUEAHL/HOMELAND SECURITY CENTER WASHDC
RUCPDO/DEPT OF COMMERCE WASHDC
RUEHRC/DEPT OF AGRICULTURE WASHINGTON DC
RULSDMK/DOT WASHDC
RHMCSUU/FAA WASHDC
RUEAYOK/FAA AERONAUTICAL CENTER OKLAHOMA CITY OK
RUEHMT/AMCONSUL MONTREAL 0110

UNCLAS NAIROBI 003968

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF/E, AF/RSA, AF/EPS, EB/TPP/BTA, AND EB/TRA/AN DEPT ALSO
PASS TO DOT FOR CONNIE HUNTER AND FAA FOR KEITH GLATZ
DEPT ALSO PASS TO USTR FOR BILL JACKSON
DEPT ALSO PASS TO USITC
DAKAR FOR FAA REP MO KEANE
DHS FOR TSA ROBERT MCLAUGHLIN
MONTREAL FOR ICAO OFFICER FAUX-GABLE

SENSITIVE
SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: [EAIR](#) [AGOA](#) [ECON](#) [ETRD](#) [PTER](#) [KE](#)
SUBJECT: Delta Announces New York-Nairobi Service Starting June
2008

REF: STATE 135337

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¶1. (U) This is an action request. See para 6.

¶2. (SBU) Summary: U.S. carrier Delta Airlines has announced plans for Nairobi-New York service via Dakar starting in June 2008. Since Kenya is an FAA Category 2 country, Nairobi passengers, luggage and cargo must be offloaded, checked, and re-loaded in Dakar. The Government of Kenya has separately requested bilateral aviation service negotiations in November. Delta's proposed service would boost trade and tourism in Kenya with the U.S., but could reduce Kenya's incentive to implement the overdue reforms needed to achieve Category 1. End summary.

¶3. (U) On September 26, Delta Airlines announced plans to start New York-Nairobi service via Dakar, Senegal effective June 2, 2008. Delta will apply to the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Kenya, and Senegal for economic authority to fly the route. The Kenya Airport Authority welcomed Delta's announcement as a vote of confidence in Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA). Delta Airlines will fly four times weekly to and from JKIA and JFK airports using Boeing 767-300ER aircraft. Flights leaving Nairobi will stop in Dakar for 90 minutes before departing for New York. Delta's special introductory one-way fare to Nairobi of \$859 is about the same level as flights via Europe, so it is not clear whether competition from Delta will reduce fares.

¶4. (U) Although neither Kenya nor Senegal has achieved FAA Category 1 status, the U.S. Transportation Security Administration (TSA) has inspected and approved Dakar Airport. Delta can fly from Dakar to New York, but incoming Nairobi passengers, luggage and cargo must be offloaded, checked, and re-loaded in Dakar. TSA assessed security at Dakar airport and Delta airlines in June 2007, and TSA will assess them regularly assessed starting in June 2008.

¶5. (SBU) The Government of Kenya (GOK) also requested bilateral air services negotiations to take place in November. Senior GOK

aviation officials told FAA officials on the margins of the recent ICAO Assembly that pressure from Kenya Airways spurred the GOK to ask for air services negotiations and pursue Category 1 status more effectively. Embassy is in the process of delivering reftel demarche requesting that the GOK consider negotiating an Open Skies Agreement. Separately, DOT Safe Skies for Africa Program Coordinator sent Transportation Ministry Permanent Secretary Ikiara and Kenya Civil Aviation Authority DG Kuto a letter laying out the process required for achieving Category 1, specifying the steps Kenya needs to take, and urging the GOK to take advantage of the assistance we continue to offer under the Safe Skies program.

¶6. (SBU) Action request: Post requests DOT provide information on the process for considering Delta's application and the likely duration of the process. Post also requests DOT's and TSA's opinion whether Delta's proposed 90 minutes in Dakar will be sufficient for offloading and checking Nairobi passengers, luggage and freight, and reloading.

¶7. (SBU) Comment: The Delta announcement and the GOK's request for aviation talks are both welcome steps that offer the prospect of boosting trade and tourism between Kenya and the U.S. However, Kenya's aviation agencies have made little visible progress towards Category 1. Open Skies talks after the December 2007 general election may help focus the GOK's attention on addressing Category 1 issues. However, we hope the proposed Delta service does not reduce Kenya's incentive to implement the necessary reforms by offering a shortcut to direct U.S.-Kenya service.

RANNEBERGER